

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Wednesday July 14, 1976 CI NIDC 76-164C

State Dept. review completed

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Wednesday, July 14, 1976.

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[REDACTED] The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

LEBANON

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[REDACTED] The Arab League foreign ministers last night ended a heated two-day session on Lebanon with a series of resolutions that appear only to paper over continued disagreements.

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[REDACTED] Reiterating previous calls for a cease-fire, the ministers declared that they "welcome the desire shown by the Syrian and Palestine Liberation Organization delegations to work immediately" to resolve their differences. The statement seems to be an expression of hope rather than a declaration of fact.

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[REDACTED] The ministers also called for strengthening the Arab security force in Lebanon with "units, equipment, and weapons" but avoided elaborating on what this will entail. They had apparently earlier scrapped an Egyptian proposal that the League arm the force to carry out a fighting rather than a peace-keeping mission.

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[REDACTED] The question of whether and how to strengthen the force was controversial throughout the League session, and the ministers may have been able to agree on no more than a broad statement of interest.

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[REDACTED] The only concrete action to emerge from the meeting was a detailed plan for seaborne shipments of food, fuel, and medical supplies to Lebanon. The ministers drew up a timetable for deliveries through the end of October.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The situation elsewhere in the country has not changed appreciably. Syrian and Christian forces are continuing their advance on the Muslim city of Tripoli from the north and south, and the Christians say they have captured a town to the south that provides Tripoli's only source of water.

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[REDACTED] A Palestinian spokesman has acknowledged that leftists are battling Syrian forces inside the former leftist stronghold of Balabakk. In Beirut, the struggle for Tall Zatar is continuing. The Palestinians say they have retaken some positions around the camp lost on Monday, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Palestinian and leftist forces are building two airstrips in southern Lebanon. The airstrips, to be used to facilitate arms shipments, are located just west of Nabatiyah and at Badara.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Both airstrips are vulnerable to air attack, and both could be brought within range of Syrian artillery. Nabatiyah could be shelled from Israel.//

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JORDAN

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[REDACTED] King Husayn yesterday designated Mudhir Badran, head of the Royal Court, to succeed Zayd Rifai as prime minister, minister of defense, and minister of foreign affairs. //Rifai will become "personal political adviser" to the King and is likely to retain considerable influence.//

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[REDACTED] Badran is a political and economic conservative from Jordan's East Bank. //Although he apparently has only tenuous ties to the area's tribal leaders, // he will be considered by the King's traditional supporters to be an improvement over Rifai, who tended to neglect army and Bedouin interests.

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[REDACTED] Badran has held a variety of military, intelligence, and civilian posts. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The change will be welcomed by Crown Prince Hassan, whose political influence declined steadily during Rifai's three years in office. We doubt that Hassan's position will in fact be significantly strengthened, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] //This could include a reduction in Jordan's cooperation with Syria, an attempt to improve relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and increased reluctance to enter into any far-reaching agreements with the Soviets.//

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[REDACTED] Rifai has been closely identified with the Jordanian decision to discuss a missile deal with the Soviets.

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[REDACTED] Rifai's inability to deal effectively with the Saudis has long been a major impediment to successful negotiations.

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ETHIOPIA

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[REDACTED] The US consul in Asmara has received reports that Ethiopian army troops in Eritrea Province are angry about the execution last Saturday of General Getachew Nadew, the respected martial law administrator and armed forces commander in Eritrea. Getachew was killed as part of a new purge of suspected opponents of the ruling military council. Major Mengistu Hailemariam, the council's first vice chairman, and his supporters are conducting the purge.

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[redacted] military officers in Eritrea have been meeting since they learned of Getachew's death to discuss a move to oust the council. [redacted]

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[redacted] the officers are in touch with military units in other areas and have their support.

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[redacted] The troops in Eritrea are war-weary and impatient with the council's inability to find a political solution to the long conflict with secessionist guerrillas.

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[redacted] Getachew shared his troops' concerns; [redacted] he had gone to Addis Ababa to present to the council a series of demands that included a call for the council to resign and permit civilian rule to be restored.

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[redacted] A determined effort by the forces in Eritrea to move troops to Addis Ababa to oust the council might well succeed. Relatively few units still guard the capital, and many members of these units probably are not staunchly loyal to the council. The Eritrean garrisons, if they decide to act, could probably count on the support of other units that have also shown dissatisfaction with the council and with Mengistu personally.

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[redacted] Yesterday, for the first time, the council publicly acknowledged the purge by announcing that 19 persons had been executed for alleged anti-government and criminal acts. In addition to Getachew, the list included Major Sisay Habte, a leading member of the council. Both officers were accused of coup plotting.

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[redacted] The other 17 persons listed were businessmen and civil servants. Various members of this group were accused of hoarding foodstuffs, bribery, and "negligence of duty." The announcement also said a member of the council had been arrested and two others had fled Addis Ababa to avoid arrest.

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[redacted]
more than the announced 19 persons have been executed so far.

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EC

//EC heads of government made significant progress on several outstanding issues--most notably direct elections to a European Parliament--during their meeting which concluded yesterday in Brussels. Much remains to be done, however, before their actions can be translated into concrete achievements.//

//The EC has suffered important setbacks lately, and the summit gave the Community a much-needed boost.//

//Agreement on the size and allocation of seats for the European Parliament removed the greatest obstacle to direct elections, now scheduled for May or June 1978. Many complex legal and procedural questions have yet to be worked out.//

//The UK and Denmark still have some reservations concerning the elections. The British want more time for electoral law changes; the Danes insist that representatives to the European Parliament should be members of national assemblies and that European and national elections should coincide.//

//If these problems cannot be resolved, the Community may allow the two countries to appoint their delegates in 1978 if they agree to uniform voting practices before elections are held again in 1982.//

//The decisions on the European Parliament must be given legal standing either by a convention ratified by each of the member-state parliaments or by a Council directive, which would leave each state free to work out its own national means of implementation. Either option is likely to raise problems for some member states, especially the French.//

//EC leaders also issued a declaration on terrorism, instructing their ministers to draft a convention on the prosecution and extradition of terrorists, particularly when hostages are involved. The convention is to include measures to improve coordination among national police forces.//

//The Nine, acknowledging that "urgent and determined" efforts must be made to harmonize EC economic and monetary policy, advanced a meeting of EC economic and finance ministers from September to late this month. Discussion will center

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on the present economic situation and a Dutch proposal to reform the European joint currency float with a looser arrangement modeled after IMF guidelines on floating arrangements--in which all EC states could participate.//

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[REDACTED] //Some EC members are skeptical of the proposal, arguing it is intended primarily to pressure Bonn to revalue the Deutschmark following the October federal elections. They--especially the Germans--also question the long-term effectiveness of such an arrangement unless accompanied by closer coordination of the members' economic policies.//

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[REDACTED] //EC leaders privately confirmed the nomination of UK Home Secretary Roy Jenkins as EC Commission president, but acquiesced to French demands that the decision not be announced until the heads of government meet again in November. Jenkins, a Labor Party luminary and staunch EC supporter, nevertheless is expected to work at building a stronger EC Commission between now and when he takes office in January, hoping especially to take an active role in the naming of other commissioners.//

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[REDACTED] //Discussion of the Puerto Rico summit--specifically the EC's lack of representation there--was less extensive than had been expected. While no formal agreement was reached, the larger EC states promised to consult before accepting invitations to possible future summits and to respect EC competencies when matters of Community interest were discussed. [REDACTED]

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POLAND

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[REDACTED] The Polish government announced yesterday that it will increase prices on meat by an average of 35 percent later this year but will maintain a price freeze on other basic foodstuffs at least for the rest of the year. The leadership promised that specific price hikes would come only after consultations with Polish workers.

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[REDACTED] The action comes less than three weeks after riots in Poland over much higher proposed price hikes on basic foodstuffs. Party chief Gierek wants to move quickly both to reassert the party's authority to establish prices and to try to recover its prestige.

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[] The latest action confirms earlier indications that the leadership would implement future price increases on a gradual and selective basis--tactics employed successfully in Hungary. The government reiterated its intention to raise wages and increase other compensatory economic benefits.

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[] In addition, the leadership decided to increase incentives for farmers to deliver more goods to the state by raising procurement prices on a number of agricultural products, including grain, meat, sugar beets, and potatoes. At the same time, farmers will have to pay more for tractors, fertilizers, and certain services.

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[] The increased procurement prices will necessitate greater government food subsidies at least until the higher retail prices go into effect. []

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CYPRUS

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[] Greek Cypriot political, labor, and cultural organizations are planning protest rallies tomorrow and on July 20 to mark the anniversaries of the right-wing coup against President Makarios in 1974 and the subsequent Turkish invasion of the northern part of the island. Demonstrations by these groups in the past have had an anti-US cast and occasionally have led to violence.

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[] According to press reports, the demonstrations will culminate in a mass rally in Nicosia on July 20. Makarios and former Greek prime minister Kanellopoulos are to speak. The anniversaries may also be marked by smaller demonstrations in Athens.

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[] Cypriot security forces will probably be prepared to prevent the demonstrations from getting out of hand. Firm police countermeasures in April prevented any serious incidents in a march against the US embassy protesting the US-Turkish defense cooperation agreement.

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[] Makarios' unusual gesture of attending the US embassy's recent Independence Day reception may have been calculated in part to subdue anti-Americanism. []

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CHINA

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[REDACTED] The commander of China's Fuchow Military Region, Pi Ting-chun, died on July 7, according to a New China News Agency announcement yesterday. Pi's death is not likely to have any immediate effect on China's unsettled political scene, but filling such a vacancy cannot help but exacerbate tensions between Peking's contending factions.

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[REDACTED] Military region commanders have long been influential political figures in China. Pi was generally believed to be a moderate.

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[REDACTED] The press announcement noted that Pi died "in the line of duty," an explanation virtually unprecedented for such a high-ranking figure.

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